



## NEW ENGLAND BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS AND ANGLERS

March 31, 2021

To Chairman Abney and the members of the House Committee on Finance

Re: Rhode Island Governor's FY 2022 Budget Articles – House Bill No. 6122 – Article 7  
Support of Recreational Hunting, Fishing and Trapping License, Tag and Stamp Fee Increase

As the fastest growing organization of hunters and anglers in the nation, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (BHA) seeks to ensure North America's outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing in a natural setting. Our members recognize that our wildlife and ecosystem are public trust resources; owned by the people and managed by the state. To realize our goal it is important to our members that we have strong state agencies that are well-funded to manage our natural resources. For generations hunters and anglers have supported state and federal fish & wildlife agencies across North America by purchasing hunting and fishing licenses, tags and stamps.

The New England Chapter of BHA support the proposed fee increase to RI General Laws 20-2-15, 20-2-16, 20-2-17, 20-2-18, 20-2-18.1, 20-2-18.3, 20-2-30, 20-2-37, 20-2-42. These chapters define license fees for recreational hunting, fishing, trapping and associated tags and stamps, and the proposed progression in fees is reasonable compared to the regional average cost for license and tags in the northeastern US.

Under RI General Laws 20-2-6 all fees collected from the sale of hunting, fishing and trapping licenses and associated tags and stamps are appropriated to the Department of Environmental Management for the protection and propagation of fish and game, and a portion of those proceeds are set aside specifically for the acquisition, stewardship and development of fish and wildlife lands.

In addition to directly funding the Department, these fees have the potential to increase Rhode Island's access to federal user-pay, user-benefit funding programs such as the Sportfish and Wildlife Restoration Acts, effectively compounding the investment that Rhode Island's hunters and anglers make in our state's wildlife and ecosystem by purchasing license and tags.

Thank you for your consideration of our support.

Sincerely,

Michael Woods  
Rumford, Rhode Island  
[rhodeisland@backcountryhunters.org](mailto:rhodeisland@backcountryhunters.org)

Rhode Island State Leadership Team Chair  
New England Chapter Board  
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers